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STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF	:	Administrative Action
	:	
	:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PROVISIONAL ORDER
	:	OF DISCIPLINE
ALICIA P. JOHNSON, LPN	:	
License # 26NP06554500	:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FINAL ORDER
	:	OF DISCIPLINE
	:	(Finalized by default
TO PRACTICE NURSING IN THE	:	on <u>May 17, 2016</u> )
STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Nursing ("Board") upon receipt of information which the Board has reviewed and upon which the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are made:

### FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Alicia P. Johnson ("Respondent") is a Licensed Practical Nurse in the State of New Jersey and has been a licensee at all times relevant hereto. (Exhibit A).

2. On or about May 25, 2013, Respondent completed and submitted an online biennial renewal application. Respondent was asked on the biennial renewal application whether Respondent would have "completed the required continuing education credits by May 31, 2013," referring to the biennial renewal period of June 1, 2011 to May 31, 2013. Respondent answered "Yes" and certified that answer by submitting the online application. (Exhibit B).

3. Upon receipt of information indicating that Respondent was arrested on February 5, 2015 by the members of the East Brunswick Township Police Department for violating N.J.S.A. 2C:35-10.5E(1) (Possess Prescription Legend Drug) and N.J.S.A. 2C:35-10.5E(2) (Possess Prescription Legend Drug), the Board sent a letter of inquiry requesting certain information and documents regarding the criminal matter, Respondent's nursing practice, and continuing education to Respondent's address in Rahway, New Jersey, via regular and certified mail on or about February 25, 2015. The regular mailing was not returned and the certified mailing was returned as "Unclaimed." (Exhibit C).

4. On or about June 30, 2015, Respondent completed and submitted an online biennial renewal application. Respondent was asked on the biennial renewal application whether Respondent would have "completed the required continuing education credits by May 31, 2015," referring to the biennial renewal period of June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2015. Respondent answered "Yes" and certified that answer by submitting the online application. (Exhibit D). On June 30, 2015, Respondent also provided the Board with her new address in Parlin, New Jersey.

5. To date, Respondent has not replied to the Board's request for information.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Respondent's failure to fully respond to the Board's request for information constitutes a failure to cooperate with a Board investigation, in contravention of N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1.2 and 1.3, which the Board deems professional misconduct pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and also subjects Respondent to disciplinary action pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h).

Service by mail to the address provided by the nurse to the Board constitutes effective notice pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:45-3.2 and 13:37-5.7. Nurses are required to notify the Board of any change of address within 30 days of a change. N.J.A.C.

13:37-5.7. Respondent notified the Board of her change of address on June 20, 2015.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(b), nurses are required to complete a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing education during the preceding biennial period in order to renew their licenses. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(f), nurses are required to maintain documentation of completion of continuing education for a period of four years after completion, and shall submit such documentation to the Board upon request.

By virtue of having failed to respond to the letter of inquiry, Respondent is deemed to have failed to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that Respondent completed the continuing education credits required for renewal during the biennial period of June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2015. The Board therefore finds Respondent in violation of N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(b) and 13:37-5.3(f), which in turn subjects Respondent to sanctions pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and (h).

Respondent's use of dishonesty and misrepresentation during the license renewal process in falsifying her continuing education information constitutes a violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b), subjecting Respondent to sanctions.

Lastly, Respondent's criminal drug arrest, raises sufficient concern such that testing, monitoring, evaluation,

and treatment are warranted, as a condition for continued or reinstated licensure, to evaluate whether Respondent's continued practice as a nurse may jeopardize the safety and welfare of the public pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-22(f) and to ensure that Respondent can properly discharge nursing functions pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-22(e).

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS on this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2015, ORDERED that upon the filing of a FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE in this matter:

1. Respondent's license to practice nursing is suspended until Respondent a) provides all the requested information in the Board's February 25, 2015 letter of inquiry, and b) provides proof of completion of 30 hours of continuing education for each biennial renewal period beginning June 1, 2011 to the time of reinstatement (30 hours for June 1, 2011 - May 31, 2013, 30 hours for June 1, 2013 - May 31, 2015, plus any hours completed within the current period of June 1, 2015 - May 31, 2017).

2. The Board will not entertain an application for reinstatement from Respondent unless and until Respondent completes a comprehensive mental health and substance abuse evaluation under the auspices of the Board's designated intervention program, the Recovery And Monitoring Program

("RAMP"), demonstrates that she is fit and competent to practice nursing, that she is in full compliance with any agreement with RAMP, that RAMP supports her return to practice, answers all inquiries regarding her arrest to the satisfaction of the Board, and demonstrates that she is up to date with her continuing education.

3. By undergoing evaluation, Respondent expressly waives any claim of privilege or confidentiality that she may have concerning RAMP reports and disclosures to the Board, and use by the Board of that information in any proceedings.

4. All costs associated with the evaluation, monitoring, and/or treatment outlined above shall be the responsibility of, and paid directly by, Respondent.

5. A reprimand is imposed on Respondent for misrepresenting the continuing education information on her license renewal application.

6. Respondent is assessed a civil penalty in the amount of seven hundred and fifty dollars (\$750). Said penalty is an aggregate penalty, which includes a penalty in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500) for failure to cooperate with a Board investigation and a penalty in the amount of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) for failing to timely complete required

continuing education. Payment shall be made by certified check, bank cashier check, or money order payable to "State of New Jersey," or by wire transfer, direct deposit, or credit card payment delivered or mailed to State Board of Nursing, Attention: Leslie Burgos, P.O. Box 45010, Newark, New Jersey 07101. Any other form of payment will be rejected and will be returned to the party making the payment. Payment shall be made no later than fifteen (15) days after the date of filing of a **Final Order of Discipline**. In the event Respondent fails to make a timely payment, a certificate of debt shall be filed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:1-24 and the Board may bring such other proceedings as authorized by law.

7. Respondent shall refrain from practicing as a nurse and shall not represent herself as a Licensed Practical Nurse until such time as her license is reinstated. Any practice in this State prior to reinstatement shall constitute grounds for a charge of unlicensed practice.

8. The within order shall be subject to finalization by the Board at 5:00 p.m. on the 30<sup>th</sup> day following entry hereof unless Respondent requests a modification or dismissal of the above stated Findings of Fact or Conclusions of Law by:

a) Submitting a written request for modification or dismissal to State Board of Nursing, Attention: Leslie Burgos,

124 Halsey Street, Sixth Floor, P.O. Box 45010, Newark, New Jersey 07101.

b) Setting forth in writing any and all reasons why said findings and conclusions should be modified or dismissed.

c) Submitting any and all documents or other written evidence supporting Respondent's request for consideration and reasons therefor or offered in mitigation of penalty.

9. Any submissions will be reviewed by the Board and the Board will thereafter determine whether further proceedings are necessary. If no material discrepancies are raised through a supplemental submission during the thirty-day period, or if the Board is not persuaded that the submitted materials merit further consideration, a Final Order of Discipline will be entered.

10. In the event that Respondent's submissions establish a need for further proceedings, including, but not limited to an evidentiary hearing, Respondent shall be notified with regard thereto. In the event that an evidentiary hearing is ordered, the preliminary findings of fact and conclusions of law contained herein may serve as notice of the factual and legal allegations in such proceeding. Further, in the event a hearing is held and upon review of the record, the Board shall not be



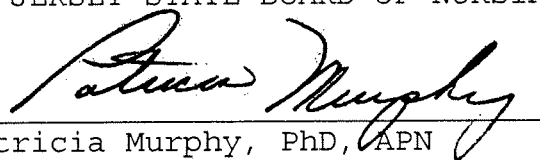
limited to the findings, conclusions and sanctions stated herein.

11. In the event that the Board receives no written submission from Respondent within 30 days following filing of this Provisional Order of Discipline, without further Board review, the Provisional Order of Discipline shall automatically become the Final Order of Discipline. The box for Final Order of Discipline shall be checked, the Final Order of Discipline shall be filed, and copies shall be mailed to Respondent. Thereafter, Respondent's failure to comply with any sanction or penalty imposed by this Order shall be considered a violation of a Board Order in contravention of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21 (e) and (h) and N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1.4 and may subject Respondent to additional sanction and/or penalty.

12. The Board reserves the right to initiate disciplinary proceedings based upon any information that Respondent ultimately provides in response to the letter of inquiry or upon any new information the Board receives, including the results of the comprehensive mental health and substance abuse evaluation.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF NURSING

By:

  
Patricia Murphy, PhD, APN  
Board President